

# Cohasset Mariner

The Mariner (and supplements) is a paid circulation newspaper published every Thursday at 541 Plain St., Marshfield, Mass. 02050 for and about the residents of Cohasset. Telephone 545-3950 or 837-3500. Mailing address: Box 71, Cohasset, Mass. 02025. Second class postage paid at Marshfield, Mass. 02050.

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As The Mariner goes to press Tuesday night, all news and advertising copy must be received by Monday at 5 p.m. Readers are invited to submit personal items, accounts of social functions, meetings, wedding and engagements. Photographs (black and white glossy) are also welcome.

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## Editorial

### Why Hostility?

August Peterson stood up at a special town meeting in 1942 — in the middle of a terrible war — and bequeathed 80 acres of land to the George F. Mealy American Legion Post. It was to be used for the rest and recuperation of all veterans.

He left the land with no strings attached. It was left informally, with no stipulations, regulations or requisites for its use and the deed reflects the same. Only a letter, addressed to the Mealy Post, states his hopes and desires for the land.

Although what has and will become of the Legion land may not embrace Mr. Peterson's original wishes, the sale to LesAnn Associates and their 33-lot subdivision plan for it is entirely legitimate. This week's **Mariner** report on the subject relays a legacy, a history and a possible future, in expository fashion, for a large tract of land.

We do not pretend to have told the whole tale, for we were unable — rather, we were not allowed to find — all there is know. Why? Why the curious reticence when the passing of the land was legal and duly approved for subdivision by the planning board. Why the surly undertones about the decision to sell the land? After all, a gift free and clear can be done with as it will.

Nearly everyone we spoke to referred us to someone else who, as it turned out, was unwilling to discuss the land for one reason or another. We asked in innocence; we weren't damning, we weren't pretending to muckrake.

So why the string of no comments? Why the rudeness and hostility? Why? Why? Why?

We think all Cohasset would like to know.



Black Rock Beach isn't always visited for bathing.

## 'It's A Boring Town That I Like To Come Home To'

By Tanna Kasperowicz

**Mariner** publisher David Cutler suggested several weeks ago that an article on Cohasset Neighborhood Associations be done as a sort of summer series. "That sounds perfectly dull," we said.

"Maybe," David answered.

A quick check with town experts like State Rep. Mary Jeanette Murray showed that there wasn't a lot of material on any neighborhood associations. The South Shore Music Circus noise-fighting group came to mind first...and Surrey Drive (one block long) was pointed out as being friendly and picnicky, but nothing terribly newsworthy.

"There used to be a Beechwood Association," one person said, "and a Gulf River Association and Hull Street Association...but I don't think any of them are terribly active. Cohasset really isn't conducive to neighborhood associations. It's kind of a block, although it has its fringes, and there are areas known as the wrong side of the tracks, like Beechwood and West Jerusalem Road. Also, there are a lot of divorces, travelling husbands, and atransitoryfactor."

Fifteen persons were selected at random for this story... the only criterion being that one had to answer one's phone when called. Chet Ellis and Donna Cogill would have been interviewed if they had been home. Millie Mitman is never home and when she is her phone is busy. Noel Ripley has been interviewed too much — scratch him. Gilbert Tower will probably write his own story anyway. Margie Knox and Marilyn Adams are off somewhere selling pinatas... so in any case, those individuals were not interviewed.

Cohasset residents, as opposed to Cohasset town officials, are quite shy. Only two out of 15 people interviewed permitted me to use their names, one being a town official. No one really said anything incriminating...they just felt they could be more expressive in their conversation without a name. "And then if I'm misquoted it won't matter," one person said.

When people cherish some set of values and do not feel any threat to them, they experience well-being. But suppose people do not experience any threat? Is that necessarily the experience of indifference? Roger Porter and others say not.

It would be easy to write about the insular town of Cohasset. But the right selection of quotes could make Cohasset seem more exotic than New York City. It would be just as easy to tell stories that are comically conventional.

The truth is a good deal less

melodramatic or clear. But this seems evident. Those interviewed strongly expressed that they wished to live in a town where things were mostly working right. In earlier years, young married years, they had the experience of the corporate trail, of political involvement. Now in their early 30's and 40's, they want contentment, time with the family, and a beautiful community in which to experience it.

If Cohasset has any sense of a single, corporate identity...it is not surprising that it should come from public utterances from the town's various councils. It is the nature of politics that councils for the most part attract people who are opinionated and bossy.

It is also the nature of newspapers to give a lot of space to the opinion of local leaders, and more often than not echo those officials' outlook in editorials.

Although it has been expressed by several of those interviewed that various town boards give some odd judgments, one individual stating that "Cohasset is the only town in the South Shore which can perk rock," most felt that the town's problems are diminutive: "I've noticed over a period of time that the only problems which the town appears to have and which consistently make the headlines are with town government itself, and in particular the police department," one of our group said.

What effect does town government have upon the neighborhoods of the community? According to my experts, less than is imagined. Town government goes its own way, the

tone and the intent of the town does not necessarily come from its town leaders, nor from the press.

#### MEET CLOVER

As a child "Clover" (not her real name) lived on a dead-end road and played kick-the-can. "I think it was probably more a neighborhood than The Common. I mean by that I was in other peoples' houses as much as in my own. My kids have only been in one or two houses on the green."

We said: maybe that's because one of your little kids is potty training and doesn't wear any pants. Clover ignored the remark.

"I solicited for the heart fund for several years in order to get to know my neighbors... but normally they don't answer the door. Actually there are a lot of renters on the green, and young working couples. So probably they just aren't home."

"Three of my neighbors are churches, a town hall and the community center. If you put people in those institutions as residents it would probably change things considerably, and collecting wouldn't be so hard."

"I'll tell you. I might as well be living in New York City. But I really like that — that gives me the privilege of being as bizarre as I feel like being."

#### HERE'S RUBE

Although in a former town "Rube" (not his real name) was active in town government, he has never even been to a town meeting in Cohasset. However a year or so ago he did attend an assessors' meeting when his valuation increased.

"I've never gone to a town

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### Notable Quotes

"I decided to move to Cohasset because it's a boring town that I like to come home to. I don't want to worry about getting mugged." — "Rube"

"I think there is an absence of neighborhood associations in Cohasset because residents look upon Cohasset as a whole. Associations spring up because of the summer residents in a community who feel they have to be heard. Scituate, Hingham and Hull all have a large influx of summer people." — State Rep. Mary Jeanette Murray

"When we first moved to town and I walked through the common to the post office I saw all these 35 and 40-year old women in tennis dresses, and I had a queasy feeling that I was back on my college campus 15 years in the future. I like Cohasset, but I refuse to wear a tennis dress to the supermarket — Unidentified female

"I'm getting a little anxious. Do you know I'm the only woman left on my block? Every other woman has gotten a divorce and moved out. There are no children left." — Unidentified woman

"Both Jane and I had moved around in a corporate atmosphere...then the promotion came. It was so far out of line. We were transferred to New York City. We transferred back to Cohasset a year and a half later when I was offered the opportunity to start my own business." — Roger Porter